

COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COUNSEL LLC

2154 Wisconsin Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

Tel. 202-333-1770
Fax 202-333-5274

Stephen G. Kraskin
skraskin@Independent-Tel.com

February 28, 2011

Via Electronic Filing

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Notice of *Ex Parte* Presentation In the Matter of Connect America Fund WC Docket No. 10-90; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future GN Docket No. 09-51; Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers WC Docket No. 07-135; High-Cost Universal Service Support WC Docket No. 05-337; Developing an Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime CC Docket No. 01-92; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service CC Docket No. 96-45; and Lifeline and Link-Up WC Docket No. 03-109

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of the Rural Broadband Alliance (“Alliance”), I met today via telephone with Zachary Katz, legal advisor to Chairman Genachowski to discuss the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (“NPRM”) adopted on February 8, 2011, in the above-referenced proceedings.

The Alliance is a growing coalition of more than two hundred rural incumbent local exchange carriers formed to advance sensible, evidence-based policies for the deployment and adoption of broadband services for all of the nation’s citizens including consumers and business entities located in rural, insular and high cost-to-serve areas of the nation.

The Alliance is committed to working with both the Commission and with rural telecommunications associations in order to develop long-term solutions to address needed reform of the universal service funding mechanisms. In this regard, I expressed to Mr. Katz the appreciation of the Alliance members for the comprehensive undertaking set forth in the NPRM, and for the constructive intent of the NPRM to address the issues of concern shared by both the Commission and rural telecommunications providers.

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We also briefly discussed the growing concerns of rural carriers with respect to the growing lack of predictability and stability of the cost recovery mechanisms upon which the provision of universal service relies. I suggested that an unintended and ironic consequence of the proposals set forth in the NPRM is growing financial uncertainty among rural providers that is impacting both infrastructure investment and job creation, and may lead to rural community job loss.

I indicated to Mr. Katz that the Alliance and its members are committed to working with the rural industry associations, other parties and the Commission to forge consensus to obtain expedient action to restore much needed stability and predictability in the universal service mechanisms. The restoration of stability and predictability is required to encourage infrastructure investment that will support rural economic development and job creation, and to help avoid rural community job loss.

In concluding our meeting, I emphasized the strong interest and willingness of the Alliance and its members to engage in continued constructive discussions with the Chairman, the Commissioners and Commission staff regarding the resolution of these matters. On behalf of the Rural Broadband Alliance, I expressed our understanding and appreciation of Mr. Katz's consideration of the concerns of the Alliance members and other rural carriers regarding the impact of financial uncertainty and instability.

I am filing this letter electronically with your office for inclusion in the record of each of the above-referenced proceedings pursuant to section 1.1206 of the Commission's Rules. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 333-1770.

Sincerely,

s/Stephen G. Kraskin

cc: Zachary Katz